Contents

Only the main sub-sections are listed here.

Introduction

Installing ***TimeTabler*** on your computer
Support & Advice
Backing-up your data for safety : to a 'memorystick' and in the Auto-Backup Library

Section A — **An Outline of *TimeTabler***
The **Tutorial**

Section B — The **QuickStart Guide**

Section C — **Starting Your Timetable : Entering Your Basic Data**
1 Basic Data
C5 School Week; School Day; Shape of week; Year-groups & Sites
C6 Subjects
C7 Rooms; rooming rules
C9 Teachers
C10 Classes; Class Scheduling Names; 'vertical' classes; homerooms
C12 Editing your Basic Data
Availability
C15 Availability screens; part-timers
C18 Special Resources
C19 Special Locations
C20 Teacher Pools
C21 Departments

Section D — **Entering the Activities to be Scheduled**
2 Activities
D1 Starting a new Batch
D3 Classes, periods, 'Dayblocking', teacher-teams, Locking activities
D5 Entering your Activities, using the 'wizards', Second subjects, Sets
D9 DayBlocking : automatic; global DayBlocking; subjects DayBlocking
D9 Re-using your data : Cloning and Promoting
D15 Collecting your Staffing data : Staffing Proformas
D17 Updating your Batches globally
Check & Validate
D19 **Analysing your data**
D21 Statistics
D22 Curriculum Diagram
D24 Auditing, Staff Loading
D25 Trial a Year
D26 Combing Chart
D28 Staff Deployment Analysis
D29 Conflict Matrix
D30 Team combinations
D31 Global DayBlocking check

Section E — **Introducing the Scheduler**
3 Schedule
E1 Starting a new schedule; continuing with an existing schedule
E2 TheTimetabling Rules Screen
E3 The Load a Batch Screen; loading and unloading
E7 The Priority List Screen
E15 Starting Positions (marked 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5)
E16 The Visual Builder Screen
E18 Dayblock Status (A, 3, 4, or 5)
E19 AutoFit (kickout) Status (1, 2, 3 . . . . . .15, 16)

Section F — **Interactive Timetabling**
3 Schedule
F2 Developing a Structure for your timetable
F3 Placing an Activity on the Priority List Screen (or the Visual Builder Screen)
F5 Using the FIT command
F6 Dealing with Kickouts
F7 Adding more Activity-Batches to your timetable
F9 Saving your timetable
F12 Staff Timetable Screen
F13 Exchanging two entire blocks of time
F14 Modifying your timetable : changing Teachers, Rooms, Subjects, Sets
F15 Class Timetable Screen
F16 Modifying your timetable : Un/Lock; Unassign; Exchanging two lessons
F22 Rooming Overview Screen; Room Timetable Screen
F24 Quality Optimiser Screen, Checking for split-teaching
F25 Tips for running your first timetable with ***TimeTabler***

Section G — **Automatic Timetabling**
3 Schedule
G1 Methods 1, 2, 3; AutoAssigning
G2 AutoFit

Section H — **Timetabling Tips, Tactics and Tricks** [see the next page]
See the Contents page at the start of Section H, which lists the 51 examples.

Section I — **Worked Examples** [see the next pages]
A list of the 24 Worked Examples is shown at the beginning of Section I.

Section J — **Printing & Publishing Your Timetable**
4 Print
J2 Checking Rooms and Subjects
J3 Changing your Day and Period labels
J5 The Print Set-up Screen
J8 The Advanced Printing Options Screen
J13 Master Staff Timetables
J15 Master Class Timetables
J16 Master Room Timetables
J17 Individual Staff Timetables
J18 Individual Class Timetables
J19 Individual Room Timetables
J20 Subject Timetables
J21 Free Staff and Rooms

Section K — **Flowcharts**
A list of the 13 flowcharts is shown at the beginning of Section K.

Section L — **Exporting**
Export
Exporting your timetable to SIMS .net, iSAMS, SEEMiS, WCBS and other systems.

Section M — **Data Grids**
These grids can be photocopied and used to prepare your data.

Section N — **Hints and Tips**

Index

SECTION H - Timetabling Tips, Tactics & Tricks

Contents

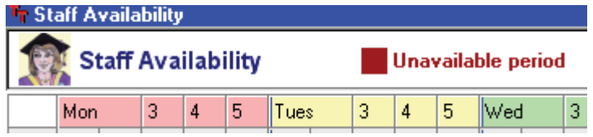
The list below shows the contents of this section, with the **key words** in bold.
See also the articles in the Support Centre and the many HelpMovies.

You are advised not to use too many of these timetabling 'tricks', especially in the first year of using ***TimeTabler***, as most of them reduce your solution-space (and so, cumulatively, they may make your timetable impossible).

H1 How can I place and lock **fixed items** ('Fixed Points') on the timetable?

H2 How can I keep 'fixed' **Part-timers**/Senior Staff/Year-tutors free at specific times?

H3 The Staff Availability Screen:
See also the PDF on Part-timers in the KnowledgeBase.



How can I keep a 'floating' **Part-timer** free for a definite number of periods but at unspecified times?

H5 How can I give a teacher a **free** half-day block each week?

H6 How can I try to ensure each Teacher has 1 **'free' period** ('PPA' time) per day? See also H32.

H7 How can I schedule a Departmental **Meeting**, or a Senior Management Meeting?

H8 How can I schedule a Teacher to be '**free**' for a period, but only in an afternoon? Or for scheduled numeracy / literacy lessons to be only in the morning?

H9 How can I make sure a specialist **Room** is not double-booked?

H10 How can I make sure a unique **Room** is not used at certain times of the week?

H11 How can I ensure one of the Deputy Heads is always **free** to deal with crises?

H12 How can I enter a **non-rectangular week** (fixed) for all classes across the whole school?

H13 How can I enter a **non-rectangular week** for some classes only?

H14 The Class Availability Screen:

H15 How can I specify staggered **Lunch-breaks**?

H16 How can I specify floating **Lunch-breaks** between fixed times?

H17 How can I ensure that a Teacher gets a **Lunch-break**, between certain times?

H18 How can I schedule a Class to be at the local **College**?

H19 What is the quickest way to **update last year's Year-10 Batch** for this year's Year-11? And update a **teacher's initials** throughout the system? And a **class scheduling name**?

H20 How can I get the Sixth Form groups to be assigned automatically to **small rooms**?

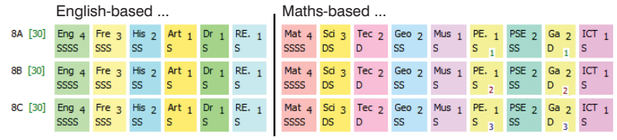
H21 How can I ensure that two different activities are **not** scheduled **on the same day**?

H22 How can I specify Teacher-teams which are **not quite consistent**?

H23 How can I specify a **Block** when 1 group (or more) is **split-taught** between 2 (or more) teachers?

H24 Specifying **Consistent Grouping**:

H25 Using **Container Blocks**.



H26 How can I '**Clone**' a Batch? Or **Split** a batch? Or **Merge** two batches?

H27 How can I '**Clone**' a Schedule?

H28 How can I prevent 'instant commuting' in a **split-site school**? Show Commuting

H29 How can I **Duplicate** a week, for a **2-week timetable**? Duplicate (week to fortnight)

H30 Our 3rd and 4th **Years (Grades) join together** for some 'vertical' lessons. How do I do this?

H31 How can I label my Option Blocks/Columns on the Priority Screen and on the final **printouts**?

H32 How can I label my Maths Sets and other groups on the **printouts**? And add '**PPA**' labels?

H33 How do I prevent items from appearing on the final **Printout**?

H34 How can I **print** the timetable labels in Welsh?

H35 How can I show the **start-finish times** for each Period on the printouts?

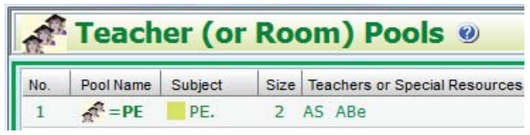
H36 How can I include a **Registration** period on the timetable? See the PDF at: Registration SEARCH

H37 How can I get **individual Student timetables**?

H38 What if I don't want to name a specific Teacher? Can I do a '**Block Timetable**'?

H39 Using Teacher Pools:

H40 We have only 5 **Science Labs**. How can I ensure I keep within this limit?



H41 For Science, how can I ensure a Double period in a Lab and a Single in a Classroom?

H42 How can I deal with Pools of **Specialist Rooms**?

H43 How can I get a good **spread** in a 10-day timetable cycle?

H44 How can I keep 2 **activities together** on the timetable?

H45 In our Primary / Prep school, how do I schedule a class to their **Home-room**? Home Rooms

H46 How should I deal with staff who teach a **second (or third) subject**?

H47 How can I specify a teacher's possible **Second Subjects**?

H48 How can I use the Advanced button, to enter **Assistant Teachers**? Advanced

H49 How can I analyse and improve any **Split-teaching**?

H50 Using Special Resources for timetabling tricks.

H51 Using Special Locations/Dummy Classes and Special Resources/Dummy Teachers.

For scheduling Primary/Prep schools, and Senior/Junior schools, etc, see Section **I**.

The fully-illustrated TimeTabler Manual Six contents pages

Section I - Worked Examples

In most schools it is a straightforward process to specify the data. However ***if your curriculum is complex or unusual,*** you may have to decide carefully in the first year of using ***TimeTabler*** how to specify the data to get the result you want. Advice is available from the HelpLine.

In this section some of the ideas outlined in the last section are developed further in specific contexts. This is done in the hope that if you have an unusual timetabling problem you may find a similar problem here, and so gain some ideas about how to solve it with ***TimeTabler***.

See also the **HelpMovies**, especially if you are thinking of using Container Blocks.

Worked Examples 1 to 8 are for solving problems in the 'Sixth Form' (ie. Years 12 and 13).

These methods are particularly concerned with keeping as much flexibility as possible in the way that Years 12 and 13 are specified in ***TimeTabler***. All too often the involved timetabling of this area of the curriculum means that the 'tail' of the Sixth Form wags the 'dog' of the main school.

In outline, the worked examples are:

1. **Keeping flexibility in Years 12 and 13 using 'student-batches'.**
   This method is particularly useful for schools with smaller Sixth Forms without a system of formal Option Blocks (electives/columns).
   ie. the school does its best to allow the students 'free choice' of their subjects.
   It is also useful for **Special Schools** with individualised learning programmes.

2. **Keeping flexibility using a 'clash table' grid.**
   This method can be used for the Upper Sixth (Y13) to use the extra flexibility that is potentially available in Year 13 (due to some subject-combinations not having been chosen by students).

3. **Keeping flexibility within Option Blocks (columns) in Years 12 and 13.**
   Many schools use a formal Options (electives) scheme with definite Blocks (columns)
   This method uses the idea of Container Blocks to keep the groups within their Option Blocks while exploiting the flexibility that is available because of shared or split teaching of the groups.

4. **Keeping flexibility in Years 12 and 13 when Option Blocks (columns) are linked.**
   This develops the idea of Container Blocks used in Worked Example 3 to the case where one or more of the Blocks is available to both Year 12 and Year 13 students.

5. **Keeping flexibility in Years 12 and 13 when some Blocks may span other Blocks.**
   This adapts the idea of Container Blocks used in Worked Example 3 to the case where some Blocks or courses may span two or more Blocks, while still ensuring access to other Blocks.

6. Examples 6 & 7 have been omitted from this edition of the Manual. They were complicated ways
7. to deal with option blocks in Sixth Forms, but now Container Blocks are a much better way.

8. **Keeping Year 12 and Year 13 groups together.**
   A variety of methods. For example, to keep Year-13 and Year-12 Games at the same time.

From time to time additional examples are posted in the KnowledgeBase: Support Centre

The examples below show a variety of curriculum diagrams being used by schools for Years 7 -11. Some of them are quite complicated, but in each case at least one solution is given. To save your time they are usually given with step-by-step instructions on what to do.

9. **Using Container Blocks.**
   This example takes the basic idea of Container Blocks (described in section H25) and applies it in more detail to a Block of subjects where there is split-teaching.
   You are advised to read this ***before*** using Container Blocks in any of the examples below.

10. **Specifying teacher-teams which are not quite consistent.**
    In this example, PE is mixed up with the French sets so the teacher-team varies.
    Three ways of dealing with this are described here,
    a) Using Global DayBlocking b) Using Container Blocks c) Using Consistent Grouping.

11. **Squeezing 'consistently-setted' activities into a fixed number of timetabled periods.**
    For example, keeping different 'Coordinated Science' lessons grouped together in Year–9.
    These two pages give step-by-step details of how to deal efficiently with this common problem, while keeping the flexibility available for FIT 'musical-chairs' moves.

12. **Keeping 'consistent sets' for more than one subject.**
    This looks at a method of keeping subject-groups together without using special methods.

13. **Blocks of 'consistently-setted' subjects.**
    This method discusses one of the checks you can apply to see if a Block of subjects is mathematically possible, and shows how to schedule it using a Consistent Grouping ID.

14. **Three blocks of 'consistently-grouped' subjects.**
    This shows a more-complicated curriculum with 3 big Blocks of consistently-setted subjects.
    Three ways of tackling the problem are given:
    a) Using a Consistent Grouping ID b) Using clashing class names c) Using Container Blocks.

15. **Another example of subject-blocking.** Three solutions are given:
    a) Using a Consistent Grouping ID b) Using Container Blocks c) Using clashing class names

16. **Block within blocks** A more complicated curriculum, with two solutions provided.

17. **Scheduling internal or 'mock' examinations.** Some ideas to experiment with.

18. **Combining two year-groups.**
    What to do when classes from different year-groups join together for some lessons.

19. **Dealing with half-classes.** What to do when two halves of a class follow a different timetable.

20. **Scheduling cover for staff absences.** But see ***StaffCover*** for a much better method.

21. **Keeping groups of subjects together in blocks.**
    This method uses a different technique, using Special Resources acting as dummy teachers.

22. **Keeping groups of subjects together in blocks.**
    Another example of a complicated curriculum, with two solutions provided.

23. **Scheduling in Scottish schools.**
    Using Pools in upper school; and 6 effective ways of scheduling S1 and S2.

24. **Scheduling Higher & Standard Level groups for the IB (International Baccalaureate).**
    How to schedule a variety of different structures for IB.

25. **Scheduling in Primary & Prep schools.**

26. **Scheduling joint Senior/Junior schools.**

27. **Scheduling an Alternative Curriculum, for a Withdrawal Group, etc.**